

DCFS Weekly Update From the State Office

Monday, August 27, 2001

Performance Milestone Plan Update

By Linda Wininger

It has been awhile since I last wrote about where we are on the Performance Milestone Plan (the Plan). I thought you might be interested in getting a status on how we are doing and what the plans for the future are.

The State Administration Team, including the Region Directors, met with Paul Vincent, the court-appointed monitor in the David C. case, on July 16. It was a very good, productive meeting in which we explained what we were doing in answer to some questions he has had on specific issues. We gave him very detailed answers and then were able to discuss the direction we were headed so that we could adjust where he saw a need. Your Region Directors were excellent at giving specific examples to illustrate points.

One of the areas that I wanted clarification from Paul on was the exit criterion for each of the milestones within the Plan. Please recall that there are nine milestones, which are listed below and include a current status report.

Milestone 1-Practice Model Development, Training, and Implementation

We are doing well with this milestone, with only two modules left to train. But more than that, we see an excitement in the Division about the way we are beginning to practice. We hear the language of the Practice Model in our communications with each other. We are hearing testimonials that the skills work and that families and children are achieving better outcomes quicker. We also hear of community partners, including judges, who are catching the vision and are looking for practice that is consistent with the Practice Model. Keep up the good work!

Milestone 2-Systems Investments

This milestone can only be exited when all of the others are. However, since it does address the budget and the annual "budget building blocks" I will say this: Look for some excellent ideas on building blocks this year that will significantly alter the ability of the Division to train workers prior to their taking on a full caseload. There are other ideas for building blocks as well.

Milestone 3-System Management Structures

This milestone has been exited (YEA)!

Milestone 4-Priority Focus Areas

We continue to work on these identified areas. The bottom line is that we won't exit this until we reach the specified goals on the Case Process Review (CPR) and the Qualitative Case Review (QCR). Achieving the exit criteria on these reviews will show that we have addressed the priority focus areas.

Milestone 5–Accountability Structures

This milestone has also been exited!

Milestone 6–Trend Data Analysis

This milestone will not be exited until we hit the mark on the CPR and QCR, and if you think about it that makes sense. The trend data is to be used to identify weaknesses within the system. We should then be using the information to pinpoint needed changes in policy and practice that, when corrected, would elevate the scores on the CPR and QCR.

Watch for some exciting ideas in this area that will include access to data specific to your own caseload or the caseloads of those you supervise. We will also be working with a newly formed committee that will help us to use data more effectively. This committee will be made up of frontline workers and state specialists. We need frontline workers to participate on this committee, so if you're interested ***please*** let me know.

Milestone 7–Case Process Review

You know the thrust here. You can get information about this review from the Division web site (<http://www.hsdcs.state.ut.us>) and clicking on the Office of Services Review button to the bottom left of the screen. There you can see just what they are looking for and the guidelines for their scoring. We can do much better at this. Also, it may be helpful for you to ask your supervisor for the newly published “Caseworker’s Field Guide.” This bright orange, spiral bound booklet will walk you through both the CPR and the QCR process. I suggest that you highlight the phrases in your logs that speak to these requirements so that you know they are there and the reviewers can quickly spot them.

Milestone 8–Qualitative Case Review

Same information as above...Also, we will soon have in place in every region a Region Milestone Coordinator. These people will be working on improving our scores on both the CPR and the QCR. The goal is to hit the exit criteria two years in a row. We saw significant improvement last year in the QCR. We expect that there will continue to be significant improvement as we finish up the Practice Model training and it continues to be incorporated into our daily work.

Milestone 9–Quality Improvement Committees

We are doing quite well in this area but again, this will be exited only when Milestones 7 and 8 are exited. We will be working to bring all of these improvement areas together so that it does help us to “hit the mark” on the QCR and CPR. I am not sure that this has been the case in the past.

So there you have it! If you have any questions or ideas about how YOU personally can help in the effort, please drop me an email. I would love to hear your perspective.